

Sutton Winter Night Shelter

19th January – 16th March 2026

Sutton Winter Night Shelter will be running for the fourth time, bringing guests into the warmth of community, shelter and hope for 8 weeks from 19th January.

“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” Matthew 5:16

Who is running the shelter?

Sutton Community Works (SCW) are a Christian charity serving the London Borough of Sutton. We are organising the shelter in partnership with local churches and the council's housing advice team.

We are hiring two staff to run the shelter, supported by the SCW Operations Manager:

- A Winter Shelter Manager, to coordinate the shelter and ensure all runs smoothly
- A Resettlement Worker, to work with the guests to secure onward accommodation and breakdown barriers

Ads are on charityjob.co.uk, closing on 7th December.

Volunteer Venue Leaders are already being recruited and will lead the evenings at each venue.

How do people in need access the shelter?

People who are rough sleeping or about to become homeless can be referred to the shelter by Sutton Council's Housing Advice Team, particularly working closely with their Rough Sleeping Lead. Shelter staff work closely with the council's Rough sleeping Lead and triage all referrals to assess suitability, as we are unable to accept people who have high-risk behaviours.

We can usually have around 10 guests in the shelter at any time.

We have had positive feedback in previous years, that the shelter has a warm, positive and safe atmosphere.

What is provided?

Shelter – 4 churches are opening their doors, and 80+ volunteers from churches across the borough support this

Nourishment – fresh cooked, hot evening meals and simple breakfast (5 nights per week dinner will be cooked in-house, with food brought in and reheated for 2 nights per week)

Sleep – camp bed and mattress, pillow with case and sleeping bag

Support with housing – experienced staff working with guests

Compassion and hope – listening ears, kindness and prayer

Where is it happening?

Our shelter is a roaming shelter, rotating between 4 different church venues throughout the week as follows:

Monday – North Cheam Baptist Church, Ridge Road, SM3 9LY

Tuesday – North Cheam Baptist Church, Ridge Road, SM3 9LY

Wednesday – Good Shepherd Carshalton Beeches, Queen Mary's Ave, SM5 4NP

Thursday – Good Shepherd Carshalton Beeches, Queen Mary's Ave, SM5 4NP

Friday – River Church, Carshalton Road, SM5 3QB

Saturday – River Church, Carshalton Road, SM5 3QB

Sunday – Salvation Army Sutton, Benhill Ave, SM1 4DD

Schedule for a night and morning at the shelter

6:30pm	Evening volunteers arrive (venue leader, hosts, cook), set up and pray
7:15-8pm	Guests arrive within this time
8pm	Dinner is served, then time for conversation and relaxation
10:30pm	Prayer and shift swap (current volunteers leave, overnight volunteers arrive)
10:45pm	External doors are locked for the night
11pm	Lights out
6am	Prayer and shift swap (overnight volunteers leave, morning volunteers arrive)
6:45am	Guests woken
7:15am	Light breakfast served
8am	Guests leave and everything is packed up
9am	Volunteers pray and leave
	(equipment moved to the next venue if it's a moving day)



Volunteering with the Shelter

We need around **80-100 volunteers** to safely run the shelter, and as a faith-based project we want these to come from churches across the borough.

Types of tasks

Volunteers support the delivery of the shelter through transporting food and equipment, cooking or serving food, or hosting guests at the venues, including sleeping there overnight (in a separate room).

Commitment

Please consider whether you can make a weekly or almost-weekly commitment for this 8-week project (minimum 6 shifts).

There will also be in-person training taking place in January for anyone who will be on site with the guests, and food safety training for those who are cooking.

Volunteer Roles

Overnight Volunteer



10:20pm-6:10am

3 people per night

- Pray as a volunteer team
- Take turns to sleep (separate room from the guests)
- Responsible overnight e.g. if fire alarm goes off
- Camp bed and mattress provided (bring your own sleeping bag)
- On-call staff number will be provided

A vital role – we aren't a night shelter if we can't stay open overnight!

Suits someone who: is happy to be behind the scenes and to face a little tiredness for the greater good

Transport Volunteer



Mornings (around 9am) and other times TBC

1-2 people per venue / mixture of availabilities in the week

- Transport camp beds, bedding and any other equipment to the next venue on moving days
- Collect / deliver food on days it is being brought it
- Mileage can be expensed

Suits someone who: has large capacity in their vehicle and availability mornings/daytimes

Volunteer Cook



6:30-9:30pm (plus planning / shopping)

1 person per evening (other volunteers/guests can help you)

- Pray as a volunteer team
- Plan and buy ingredients for a simple meal for guests and volunteers (maximum 15 people)
 - Allergies/dietary requirements are provided in advance
 - Food costs will be reimbursed
- Prepare the meal at the venue, inviting help from volunteers/guests
- Eat the meal with the other volunteers and guests
- Must have Food Safety Level 2 certificate (online training available at no cost)



Suits someone who: loves to see people happy and fed and is comfortable catering for a large group

Volunteer Host



Evenings

6:30pm-10:30pm

2 people per evening
(plus Venue Leader and Cook)

Mornings

6am-9am

3 people per morning

- Set up bedding, tables, etc (evenings) or pack down (mornings)
- Provide a warm welcome and friendly atmosphere
- Listen well and highlight any support needs to the Venue Leader, also respecting when someone doesn't want to talk
- Help with preparing food and laying the table, be part of any evening activity
- Pray together at the beginning/end of shift and offer prayer/share faith where it seems appropriate (training/guidance will be provided).

Suits someone who: is a people person, good at putting people at ease and works well in a team. People who speak multiple languages particularly welcome!

Next steps to volunteering with the shelter

1. If you haven't already, write to shelter@suttoncommunityworks.org to say you are interested, and we will send further information including links to apply to volunteer
2. Choose which role will suit you best and complete the volunteer application form by Sunday 14th December
3. A reference will be requested from your church leader
4. Online rota sign-ups will go live early January (please consider planning ahead for mid-week slots if at all possible)
5. Training will also take place in January (not needed if doing Transport only)
 - Saturday 10th January, 10:30am-1:30pm, Salvation Army
 - Evening training date, details TBC